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TOMALES IN 1898

# Marin's Historic Tomales and Presbyterian Church

... by ...

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FOREWORD

TOMALES, Marin County, California, was the first intensively developed agricultural section in Northern California. Her pioneers established a noted shipping port. Half the population of Marin County was at one time centered around Tomales. Tomales' post office is second only to San Rafael in years.

Protestants in the area, meeting in Beck Schoolhouse on October 21, 1860, were formally organized into a church. This school was located a few miles northeast of Tomales in what was known as Tomales Valley. This was about the first formal organization of a Protestant church in the county. Methodists in San Rafael had formed the nucleus of a society, but it was not until 1862 that the Rev. Noah Burton was appointed to San Rafael Methodists, according to the Rev. Ervin Tipton, now of San Rafael.

Prior to 1860, religious services had been held by visiting ministers both in Tomales and San Rafael townships.

Because of primitive roads and difficult transportation, it was not practical for all Protestants in the area to meet at Beck School; therefore it was not long until several churches branched off from that first organized church, which in December of 1861 changed its name from Bodega to Two Rock, and subsequently moved to a location near the famous two rocks.

The Tomales branch of this church received a regular ministry beginning May 1, 1865, and it was the Tomales branch that built the first Protestant church building in Marin County, completing it in 1866, only 16 years after the first Presbyterian house of worship had been built in California.

This is the story of the Tomales church, bringing in much of the history of the community and surrounding area, as it is impossible to separate one from the other.

The author's first thought was to mimeograph the material and distribute at cost, but due to the limited time, it was felt that the most practical way would be to have it published. The increase in the cost will not be minded by those who, like the author, are very anxious to have this material on hand.

This is only a beginning—others must carry on this work—for indeed it is a fascinating story of Marin's pioneers and their Protestant church.

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**FIRST PROTESTANT SERVICE IN MARIN AND THE BAY AREA**

The history of the Presbyterian Church of Tomales becomes even more meaningful when a background of Protestant beginnings in California is known. If we go back to the beginning we note that not far from the present location of Tomales, in the same county of Marin, on Sunday, June 24, 1579, there was conducted the first religious service on the Pacific Coast. The Rev. Francis Fletcher of the Church of England, clergyman of Sir Francis Drake's expedition, held the service which was attended not only by Drake and his men, but by the native Indians as well. This was also the first Protestant service in English to be conducted in what is now continental United States, for Drake landed at Drake's Bay twenty-eight years before the settlement of Jamestown was founded. Therefore, to the Rev. Francis Fletcher goes the honor of preaching the gospel of Christ in Marin County, almost 200 years before the Dolores mission was founded and 238 years before the Russians settled at Fort Ross.

Jedediah "Bible Toter" Smith and his party which arrived in California in 1826 by the overland route were about the next to follow Protestant forms of worship in California, but it is doubtful if they passed through the territory now Marin County.

The Rev. Jonathan Green, a Congregational missionary from Hawaii, was the first Protestant pastor to enter San Francisco Bay, and as the purpose of his trip was to make explorations to see if conditions were practical for the planting of a colony, he may have spent some time in Marin in the fall of 1829. However, there is no record of his conducting a service.

During 1846 and 1847 several Protestant ministers set foot on California soil. Some of them were on their way elsewhere or were assigned to ships. Among them were the Rev. Walter Colton, Congregational; the Rev. Thaddeus M. Leavenworth, Episcopal; the Rev. William Roberts, Methodist; the Rev. James H. Wilbur, Methodist; the Rev. Chester S. Lyman, Congregational; and the Rev. Joel Newton, Congregational.

By the end of 1847 three ordained Protestant ministers were living in California, all engaged in secular activities as well as religious work. They were Walter Colton, alcalde at Monterey; T. M. Leavenworth, alcalde at San Francisco; and Chester S. Lyman, surveyor. Mr. A. A. Hecox and Mr. Elihu Anthony, Methodist local preachers, were also carrying on religious work.

### **DISCOVERY OF GOLD AND THE CHURCHES**

On March 15, 1848, the **Californian** carried the startling news of the discovery of gold at Sutter's mill. This was the signal for a great immigration to California. Protestant churches in the East became awake to their opportunities and responsibilities in California.

Both branches of the Presbyterian church responded by sending out missionaries. Presbyterians in 1837 had divided into two branches, Old School and New School. The Old School group had broken with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and had set up its own foreign missions board and later continued to co-operate with the Congregational Church in the American Board and also in the American Home Missionary Society.

Thus on October 19, 1848, the Rev. Timothy Dwight Hunt, a New School Presbyterian, arrived in San Francisco from Honolulu. He was the first Protestant clergyman to engage in full time religious work in California. The Rev. T. Dwight Hunt conducted the first recorded Protestant communion service in California on January 7, 1849.

The first Old School minister to arrive was the Rev. Sylvester Woodbridge, Jr. He was a passenger on the California, arriving in San Francisco February 28, 1849. On April 15, he organized the First Presbyterian Church of Benicia with four charter members. This church had the distinction of being the first Protestant denominational church in California with a fully ordained pastor. The life of this church was short but its name was perpetuated for a time by the Presbytery. The church was abandoned in 1871, but a special service and dedication of a marker at the site of this church took place on November 27, 1932.

At the close of 1849 there were a number of fully ordained Presbyterian ministers working in California and it was to be expected that before the year was out the first Presbytery was organized. The New School Presbytery of San Francisco, attached to the Synod of New York and New Jersey, held its first meeting at Monterey in the fall of 1849. This Presbytery was the first organized Protestant convention to meet in California and was also the first denominational all-state organization to be perfected.

The Old School Presbytery of California was not organized until February 20, 1850, when the Reverends Sylvester Woodbridge, Jr., Albert Williams, and James Woods met at Benicia.

These two Presbyteries merged at the time of the union of the Old and New School branches in 1870.

### MARIN-SONOMA PIONEERS

By 1850 some of California's pioneers, having poor luck in the gold fields, sought gold in another form, namely, in agricultural products which were greatly in demand. Thus portions of Marin and Sonoma counties were sought by those who were willing to till the soil. Sonoma county had the reputation of having some of the finest land in the state. According to some, it was known upon the Coast as the "State of Missouri" and was early sought by farmers from the western frontiers.

Thus we come to this Marin coastal area, and specifically, Tomales, for it was here that some pioneering work was done in agriculture, and it was to the white people who settled here that ministers of the Gospel began to preach, not very many years after John Keys and Alexander Noble began farming the rolling hills in 1850.

"Tomales" is a word from the Coast Miwok Indian dialect. It refers to bay or shore-dwellers. Bands of Tomallos Indians were numerous along the bay, but by 1857 the country was so well fenced in that the Indians were forced to cease their wanderings. Then they took up the tasks of the white man, as by 1854 farming had become general and game had been driven back into remote canyons. Some were hired in bands to dig potatoes and harvest grain.

Today there are very few of the Indians left. Some descendants still occupy the little fishing village now known as Marconi, from the wireless station which used to be above the hill.

It was in September of 1850 that Tomales had its beginning, when two young Irishmen, John Keys and Alexander Noble, made their way up the three miles of estuary from the bay in their fifteen-ton schooner named the "Spray." Keys, on an overland trip from San Francisco, had discovered the little valley of rich soil and had staked his claim. When the rumor came to him that someone was about to jump his claim, he and Noble, who had just marketed a crop of potatoes raised on rented ground at Bodega Point, decided to take possession of the claim.

It was a grassy country with few trees. Tiny streams, fed by numerous springs, flowed the year round. Herds of antelope, deer and elk grazed on wild oats and knee-high clover. Grizzly bear ambled through every thicket.

The first night Keys and Noble made camp beside the brook which flows from the old Buchanan ranch. One of the springs which fed this brook is now utilized by Tomales Presbyterian Church for its water supply.

Next morning the "Spray" was poled around the bluff to the east arm of the estuary. Permanent camp was pitched on the bank of the little creek, about opposite the present site of Tomales Joint Union High School. Work began immediately on a house of rough boards. An old cypress tree growing in the field marks the site of this first building.

In a few years this general location became the center of a rapidly growing coastal town. Warren Dutton located on land adjacent to the Keys and Noble tract in 1852, and later on he and Keys formed a partnership to operate a general merchandise store. They began business early in 1854 in a crude shack at the head of the estuary, where California Highway No. 1 now dips into the flat at the foot of the high school hill. The Tomalles Post Office, as then spelled, was established in this building on September 29, 1854, with Valentine Bennett as postmaster. In years this post office is second only to San Rafael in the county of Marin.

In 1854 a number of wagon roads radiating from Tomales were authorized by the supervisors.

Keys and Dutton eventually terminated their partnership, and Dutton started a store of his own just north of what was known as Keys Port in 1858. This was the beginning of "upper town," or "Dutton town," as distinguished from "lower town," or Keys Port. The term "lower town" is still used frequently today.

Tomales not only supported the farmers with a fine general merchandise store and a hotel, but with a profitable shipping business as well. A boat, the "Spray," was operated by Keys and Noble, and was kept plying between Bodega, Keys Port at Tomales, and San Francisco until the spring of 1857. Passenger fare was \$8.00 to San Francisco or \$15.00 round trip.

## FIRST PROTESTANT SERVICES IN TOMALES

It was some time in the late 1850's that the first Protestant religious services were held in or near Tomales. Mr. Stemple, a layman, conducted services near Tomales in a small school house which stood on the south bank of the San Antonio River at the ford opposite Whitaker's Bluff. A small burial ground was nearby. No evidences of the school house or burial grounds remain.

The Stemple home was perhaps a quarter mile up stream. Mrs. Stemple was somewhat of a religious fanatic, and took part in all of the services. She had been committed to an insane asylum and later returned home, judged as cured. Unfortunately, this proved untrue, for on Thursday morning, January 15, 1863, she committed a tragic deed and sacrificed her own eight months son, Johnny.

Meanwhile a church had been organized in 1856 at Santa Rosa by the Rev. James Woods, D. D., who was appointed Home Missionary to California by the Presbyterian Board of Domestic Missions in November, 1848.

The probability is that Dr. Woods conducted religious services for the people in the Tomales area. Dr. Woods' son later became the editor of the Petaluma daily paper.

Mr. A. B. Dickinson of Tomales tells that in early days when a death occurred it was difficult to find a minister. He says that until the early 1860's most of the burials took place on the ranches or in small burial places such as that at the school house on the San Antonio River, opposite Whitaker's Bluff.

About 1864 Warren Dutton opened a Protestant cemetery near the town of Tomales. Marin County's first Protestant church building was soon to be built

[Three]

nearby. This cemetery is still in use today. It was deeded to the church in recent years by the Dutton heirs.

Mr. Dickinson also tells that when there was a death in the early days, neighbors ungrudgingly gave all assistance possible. As soon as death occurred, the ones in attendance tied a cloth tightly under the chin until the jaw set. Some one hastily nailed together a box of rough boards, while others dug the grave on a nearby hillside.

A pioneer burial was handled entirely by friends and neighbors. The deceased was dressed in Sunday clothes and laid out in the rude coffin. Hands were crossed over the breast, clutching a flower. Everyone sat up with the family through the first night. Next day the coffin was nailed tight and hauled away to the grave. A chapter was read from the Bible and a short prayer said before the coffin was lowered into the ground.

During the early 1860's Tomales enjoyed its heyday as a port. On shipping days the warehouses were bee-hives of activity, while long lines of teams and farm wagons stood on the embarcadero, waiting a turn to unload. Blacksmiths' anvils rang from early morning until dark. Women folk as well as the men shopped for all sorts of supplies and wares. Saloons were crowded day and night. The little paddle-wheel steamer "Elk" was kept busy on the estuary. A great pair of elk horns nailed to the pilot house signified her name. Lighters piled high with produce were towed to anchored ships in the bay, waiting for cargos of grain and potatoes. Keys erected a warehouse of 10,000 tons storage capacity at the foot of the Bodega road in 1865. Barges were loaded from wooden chutes from this warehouse.

It was with a great deal of joy that Tomales people welcomed regular religious services in their nearest school, called the Beck School, located a few miles north and east.

The Rev. Thomas Fraser was the minister responsible for these early services in the Beck School. Mr. Fraser had arrived in Santa Rosa in December, 1859. At that time the Santa Rosa church had almost been abandoned, so Mr. Fraser turned to the rural districts nearby.

Mr. Fraser was received into the Presbytery of Benicia May 2, 1860, at a meeting at Suisun, but was not officially enrolled until a meeting in Stockton October 1, 1860, due to the fact that his letter from the Presbytery of Arkansas was slow in coming.

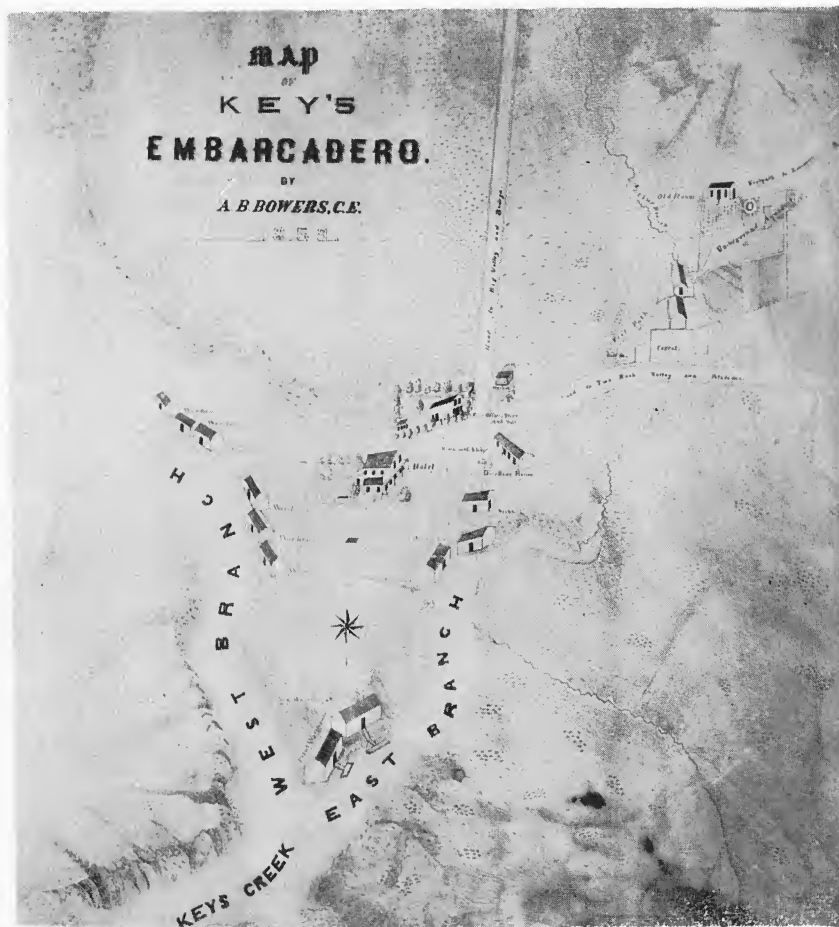
Mr. Fraser's name was one that was to become well known in the story of Presbyterianism upon the Pacific Coast. It is said of Mr. Fraser that he founded more Presbyterian churches on the Pacific Coast than any other man. He is credited with the organization of something like 125 churches. He became Synodical Missionary in 1868 and the vast extent of the Synod belonged to this man.

At a meeting of the Presbytery in Stockton October 2, 1860, the committee on Missions reported four fields of missionary labors existing within the bounds of the Presbytery, one of them being Santa Rosa. In connection with it we note this statement in the minutes of the Presbytery: "Probability that several important churches will eventually be gathered within this field seems imperatively to call for the continuance there of missionary operations. The committee recommend that \$600 be appropriated to this field."

After returning home from Presbytery, Mr. Fraser and the Rev. Frederick Buel, American Bible Society representative from San Francisco, organized an Old School Presbyterian Church at the Beck School, Marin County, on October 21, 1860.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. A request for the organization of a Presbyterian church was signed by 14 persons. Stephen C.

[Four]



JOHN KEYS



Fowler, Robert Andrews and David Morton were elected elders. The church was to be known as Bodega Presbyterian Church. Charter members were: Stephen C. Fowler and Rebeca, his wife (see picture), Harry Schuller and Elizabeth, his wife, Samuel Schuller, Alexander James Waddell, Robert Andrews and Mary, his wife, R. S. Whigham and his wife, David Morton and Margaret, his wife, R. A. Morton, and Mrs. M. J. Dutton.

A number of the original church letters which these people presented to the Rev. Thomas Fraser are now in the archives of San Francisco Theological Seminary among the Fraser collection.

Mr. Fraser wrote in the session minutes book, "The services of that interesting occasion were solemn and justable, may the Lord bless this infant church and make it a blessing to multitudes."

This infant church had no permanent dwelling place. Meetings were held in the Iowa District School, nearer Petaluma, and up in Bloomfield, as well as in Beck School. Would the house of worship be built in Marin or Sonoma County? Reading between the lines, this must have been a very serious question. Possibly the fact that residents of Tomales and vicinity were so involved in the Spanish grant claim, the Balsa de Tomales, none of them apparently having clear title to their lands, that the congregation looked to the Sonoma County supporters for a place of worship, where, incidentally, they would be able to get a clear title to any church property that might be secured. In any case, meetings were held in Tomales Valley, Marin County, until the church near the Two Rocks was completed in the spring of 1863. This church building stood until October 7, 1895, when it burned to the ground.

Sessional records, dated December 28, 1861, read, "Session met in the Beck School house. . . . After religious services preparatory to the Lord's Supper the church and congregation held a congregational meeting of which Mr. Andrews was chairman and Mr. Samuel Schuller was secretary. The subject of erecting a house of worship for the use of the congregation's stated meeting in the Beck and Iowa district school houses was considered. After a full discussion of the subject in which all the members present participated it was resolved to elect a board of trustees to select a location for a church and procure subscriptions for its erection, said location to be in the vicinity of the two rocks or within a mile eastward of the same."

Trustees elected were Robert Andrews, Alexander McRay, David Morrow, Samuel Schuller, Hugh Gaston, and George W. Case. At the same meeting the name of the church was changed from Bodega to Two Rock Valley Church by a vote of the congregation.

Indicative of the fact that not all members and friends of the Bodega church were satisfied with the proposed Two Rock site is Mr. Fraser's report at a meeting of Presbytery in San Francisco on October 7, 1862, when he told them that "a portion of the Bodega church had raised \$1600 for the erection of a church in Two Rock valley and hoped to finish the house before the close of the year."

It was not until 1863 that the change of name was reported to Presbytery, meeting at Silveyville May 8, at the Westminster Church of Putah. Perhaps one reason a name change was desirable was that the new location would automatically rule out Tomales-Bodega Protestants, due to primitive travel conditions.

In connection with Mr. Fraser's report of the name change to Presbytery, the following note has been found: "O pity that it was not 'Two Rocks' because there were two. They are historical rocks. . . . They are a Spanish landmark and the original trail leading to the Coast ran between them."

Nevertheless, the church has always been known as the "Two Rock Church" and not the "Two Rocks Church."



The Two Rock church was dedicated May 3, 1863, with Dr. Anderson of San Francisco preaching. Mr. Fraser offered the dedicatory prayer. Many were unable to enter the crowded church. In the afternoon the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed, and on the next day, Monday, Dr. Anderson preached again and more money was raised by pew rentals.

Mr. Ezekiel Denman, grandfather of Mr. E. D. McNear of Petaluma, kept a journal at the time, and notes the dedication service. He mentions the cost of the building at \$3200 and says 500 people were present. The next day mention is made that he acted as auctioneer and rented 15 pews for one year, bringing in \$451.00. In this same journal he tells of Mr. Fraser's sermon on April 23, 1865, which was on the death of Lincoln.

## **TOMALES BATTLES THE LAND CLAIM BEFORE ATTENTION IS TURNED TO A CHURCH BUILDING**

Meanwhile, Tomales was so busy fighting the "land claim" they had little time to think of building a church building. These pioneers had to endure many trials and tribulations but none caused them so much trouble, anxiety, worry, and expense as the acquiring of permanent title to their land. Those who first settled in the area thought they were taking up government land. Consequently there was considerable surprise when the claim was filed with the United States Land Commission, covering all lands between Stemple Creek and Walker Creek and tapering to a point at the Two Rocks. The Land Commission confirmed the claim April 11, 1854, and the long series of legal battles which followed during the next few years are a story by themselves. The case was twice carried to the Supreme Court. The settlers formed a league and each member was assessed for each acre of land to finance these appeals. Finally in 1863, the court rejected the claim as fraudulent and declared the whole tract to be government land. In the March 21, 1863, Marin County Journal, appears the following advertisement: "GRAND BARBECUE AT TOMALES. The citizens of Tomales will, on Thursday, April 2nd, A. D., 1863, give a grand barbecue, in honor of the Triumph of Truth and Justice over Fraud and Falsehood, backed by all the influences of wealth and position as evidenced by the recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, rejecting the land claim in Marin County, known also as Balsa de Tomales, being for about 25,000 acres of the finest agricultural lands in the state and worth in the neighborhood of half million of dollars. The undersigned, committee of arrangements, respectfully announce that preparations will be made for at least two thousand people. A Band of Music will be in attendance, and a good time generally is anticipated. The Barbecue will come off at 1 o'clock P. M. The friends of the Honest Settler in Marin and adjoining counties are cordially invited to attend." Signed, G. W. Burbank, M. Osborne, Wm. Vanderbilt, Warren Dutton, and John Keys, committee."

In the April 11, 1863, Marin Journal is a write-up of the Settlers' Barbecue at Tomales. 1500 took dinner and the evening ball at The American was quite a success, with the Bloomfield Band providing the music.

Thus by 1865 things were looking much brighter for the pioneers of Tomales. The Tomales correspondent for the Marin Journal in the February 18, 1865, issue mentions the Jno. Sime and Co.'s pet project of land piracy and goes on to say, "Tomales had shook off the lethargy that so long imbued it. . . ."

There was considerable shipping on the bay. Samuel Penfield Taylor had erected a paper mill in 1856 on Daniels Creek, now known as Paper Mill Creek, which was supposed to have been the first paper mill built west of the Mississippi River. The warehouse was situated at the end of Tomales Bay. Rags to supply the mill were shipped by schooner through the bay, then loaded on a scow and

floated on the tide to the warehouse, where they were transported by oxen to the factory.

The undertaking was prosperous from the beginning, but especially during this Civil War period. A history should be written about the shipping on Tomales Bay which would include the exciting times during prohibition.

The May 23, 1867, Petaluma paper says, "Steamer to Tomales. The Hudson Bay Company's steamer, John Hancock, chartered to ply between Tomales and San Francisco, will be put on the route about the middle of August next." Again in August 1, 1867, issue, "We are informed that the California, Oregon and Mexican Steamship Company will soon start a line of steamers between San Francisco and Tomales. The steamer 'Cassie Telfair,' formerly a blockade runner off the coast of North Carolina, will be placed on the route."

### REV. ALEXANDER FAIRBAIRN BEGAN MINISTRY TO TOMALES IN 1865

At last the time had come when serious attention could be given to a regular Protestant ministry in Tomales. Mr. Fraser had conducted services in Tomales from time to time, and specific record is made of his baptizing the children of Mrs. George Dutton on May 2, 1863, but previous to 1865 there was no regular ministry in the town itself.

It is not known what minister visited Tomales in 1863 and preached in the Franklin school, located at that time about one mile west of Tomales. An unknown hand has written, "It was my privilege to visit Tomales in 1863 and to conduct worship in its school house. At that time it was an important business point."

The Rev. Alexander Fairbairn was commissioned to do Home Mission work for the Presbytery at Benicia at a meeting held in Sacramento October 6, 1857, for the "princely sum of six hundred dollars a year." It was probably Mr. Fraser more than anyone else that persuaded Mr. Fairbairn to begin a regular ministry in Tomales the first of May, 1865.

Just previous to Mr. Fairbairn's locating in Tomales, some very interesting developments were taking place in Bloomfield and Valley Ford.

Stephen C. Fowler, one of Two Rock's first elders, moved his large family to what is now known as Valley Ford. The community was known as Fowlerville in early days. Mr. and Mrs. Fowler were the main supporters of Presbyterian work at Valley Ford.

Those interested in a Presbyterian church in that area decided the best thing would be to have one organization which could meet either in Valley Ford or Bloomfield. The name of the organization would be the Big Valley Presbyterian Church. Thus in Bloomfield, December 5, 1863, Saturday afternoon, after Divine Service in the Methodist Episcopal Church, Mr. Fraser organized the Big Valley Church, with twelve members, and Mr. Stephen Fowler of Valley Ford was elected elder. At the beginning of the meeting a letter was read which was dated November 21, 1863, requesting the Rev. Thomas Fraser to organize the Big Valley Church.

The November date has sometimes been given as the date of the organization. This, of course, would not be correct. As to the date of December 5, there is a conflict here, but the probability is that the date is correct and the one that appears in the minutes of Presbytery on page seventy is incorrect. The minutes of a meeting of Presbytery in San Francisco on October 5, 1864, almost a year after the organization of the Big Valley Church, state: "Mr. Fraser reported the organization of the church of Big Valley at Bloomfield on the 23rd of December, 1863, consisting of 15 members and one elder, Stephen C. Fowler."

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TOMALES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



DR. THOMAS FRASER



REV. ALEXANDER FAIRBAIRN

By May, 1865, the situation in Tomales was that Mr. Warren Dutton was willing to give land for a church building and Mr. Fairbairn was willing to assume the ministry providing he could supplement his salary from the Home Missions Board.

At a meeting of Presbytery at the Two Rock Valley Church, May 19, 1865, the following minutes were recorded: "After spending an hour in devotional exercises and having interesting and valuable reports from the different churches, and statements throwing light on the missionary wants of several points lying within the bounds of this Presbytery, the following motions were made by Rev. T. Fraser, and adopted by Presbytery. (1) That this Presbytery recommend the Rev. A. Fairbairn to the Board of Domestic Missions, as a missionary at the three points of Tomales, Bodega, and Duncan's Mills, and request the Board without formal application from either of these places, to supplement his salary in the amount of \$400.00 from the first of May, 1865, and further that the Moderator and Stated Clerk be the committee to conduct the necessary correspondence with the Board."

Thus Mr. Fairbairn's ministry to Tomales continued on, and by the end of that year a church building was assured in Tomales on the site given by Mr. Dutton. The men who acted as Trustees were Warren Dutton, Thomas McCune, George W. Burbank, and Robert Bailey (see pictures) and they gave generously of their own time and money.

It is said that the understanding at the time was that the church was not to become a denominational church. Perhaps the thought in mind was that any minister of the Gospel would be welcome to preach in the pulpit. This caused some misunderstanding later on, and several of the original contributors lost interest in the church when the strong Scotch-Irish element voted to affiliate with the Presbyterian denomination.

Looking back to this period, it would seem that his move was inevitable. Not only were there Presbyterian churches on every side, but three strong Presbyterian leaders were in constant contact with the community of Tomales in those early years. Furthermore, denominational men were about all that could be secured for ministers, and the fact was that Presbyterian ministers seemed to be in the majority in this area. Also one must keep in mind that Mr. Fairbairn's salary was supplemented by the Presbyterian Home Missions Board. Later the church erection Board approved a loan of \$500.00 to the Tomales Church.

For six years the church remained independent, but the inevitable took place in 1871, when it was formally organized into a Presbyterian church.

On December 17, 1865, the Two Rock Church dismissed Mrs. J. M. Dutton to unite with the Tomales Church. In regard to the relationship between Two Rock and Tomales, we read in Mr. Fraser's own handwriting, "two churches, the Big Valley Church, and the Tomales Church, have literally grown out of it (Two Rock) and may justly be considered its daughters." Indeed, Tomales Church traces her beginnings back to the organization of the Bodega Church, Marin County, 1860.

By the spring of 1866 the new church building was completed as planned at a cost of \$4,000. This was the first Protestant church building to be constructed in Marin County. Sunday, April 22, 1866, was set for the dedication day.

## **TOMALES CHURCH DESTROYED BY FIRE**

Tomales Presbyterian Church was completely destroyed by fire on April 16, 1866. The grounds were being cleaned up and the trash burned in preparation for the dedication service, when the building suddenly caught fire on Monday evening. Two large hollow pillars in front acted as flues and within a few minutes the fine new structure was but a heap of embers!

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The following article is found in the Petaluma Journal and Argus, dated Thursday, April 19, 1866: "CHURCH BURNED. John Keys, Esq., informs us that the Presbyterian Church at Tomales was destroyed by fire on Monday last. It was a neat edifice, just completed at a cost of \$4,000, and uninsured. On Saturday fire had been set to shavings around the building, and the heavy wind of Monday stirred up the smouldering embers, thus setting fire to the building."

Other details of the fire are not known. It is reported that Mr. Buchanan, one of the first to the scene, rescued the pulpit Bible. It is not known to the author if anything else was saved, but the date in the Bible indicates that it had been on the pulpit of the first church building, for it was printed in 1864. As far as everyone can remember, this Bible has always been in the church. There is a notation on the fly leaf as follows, "Rebound and repaired by the Ladies' Aid of the Tomales Presbyterian Church, 1936."

There was only one thing to do—rebuild. Thus we find in the April 28, 1866, Marin County Journal this article: "Munificence. We understand that W. Dutton, Esq., merchant at Tomales, has subscribed \$1,000 towards the erection of a church in that town, to be built upon the site of the one recently destroyed by fire. Such munificence is certainly worthy of record."

Previous to the fire, Mr. Fairbairn sent in a report to Presbytery which was forwarded on and which came out in the minutes of the General Assembly of 1866. Thus the first recorded statistics for Tomales in the national publication appeared in 1866, only one year after the statistics for the name "Two Rock" appeared.

The membership for the previous church year was not given, but a Sunday School of 15 was listed, and the fact that two infant baptisms had occurred. The figure given for the receipts during the past church year was \$3500.

Mr. Fairbairn, also interested in establishing a church at Bodega town, was soon able to establish one there, and he was able to organize it as a Presbyterian church. The date was November 5, 1865. Nine members made up the first roll of the church. It was called Shiloh Church in order not to confuse it with the old Bodega church that used to meet in the Beck School house near Tomales. The name Shiloh Church appeared in the General Assembly minutes for the first time in 1867 with a membership of 15 and Alexander Fairbairn as Stated Supply.

The name "Shiloh Church" did not last, however, and it was changed to the Presbyterian Church of Bodega April 19, 1889, the same date that the name Big Valley Church was changed to the "Presbyterian Church of Valley Ford."

After the Tomales church burned, services were conducted in the homes. A melodian, owned by the Holland family, was carried to services by Mr. Holland. Mrs. Holland played for congregational singing and for the choir, composed among others of Mrs. George Dutton and Mr. Henry Ashley. Soon the first public school was built in the town of Tomales and undoubtedly services were held there from time to time until a new church could be built.

A benevolent act of the community took place on March 15, 1865, when a benefit ball was given for the Christian Commission. It was held at "Dutton's New and Commodious Store." The purpose was "alleviating sufferings of our sick and wounded soldiers."

## TOMALES EMBARCADERO DOOMED

Tomales' famous shipping port was doomed. Tide waters receded year by year as winter rains washed tons of mud off the plowed hillsides. Keys worked frantically to keep the estuary dredged, while he vigorously opposed the opening of a county road along its bank. The bay itself was rapidly filling in. Ships found it increasingly difficult to find anchorage in the sheltered coves. The bar had always been dangerous

to navigation, which perhaps was the reason why government funds were never appropriated for its dredging. Among others that were wrecked at the entrance to Tomales Bay were the schooner Anglo-Saxon and the schooner Marin.

The railroad was coming and a new epoch was approaching. Piling and empty sheds slowly disintegrated with time. Pasture grasses overgrew the embarcadero. The old "Elk" lay rotting in the mud below Stony Point. All that is left of the old embarcadero is a post and the wagon roads along the hillside.

## SECOND PROTESTANT CHURCH BUILT IN TOMALES

With the financial support of such men as Dutton, work began on this second building early in 1868. It was to be built on the foundations of the destroyed church and was to be stripped of all unnecessary items, such as pillars in front.

One of the most difficult dates to fix in writing the history of the church was the date of the completion of this second building. In the History of Marin County, published in 1880, several incorrect statements are made in regard to the two buildings constructed at Tomales.

Here again we can turn to the minutes of Presbytery. At a meeting held on Saturday, May 9, 1868, at Healdsburg, the committee on the narrative submitted a report which contained the following: "For our encouragement we have it to state that there are three church edifices now in process of erection, namely at Santa Rosa, Bodega Corners, and Tomales, and will be completed during the approaching summer. Committee—A. Fairbairn, James Wylie."

Thus the Presbyterian church building of Tomales, at this writing, is 81 years old, having been a perpetual lighthouse to its community down through the many years. The simplicity of design, the quaint pulpit furniture, and the solid board divider down the center section of pews, all point to an earlier day.

The attempt to economize resulted in the spending of only \$3500 on the second building, but even at that a large debt remained, and the probability is that some of the former contributors were rather reluctant to give so generously again when it was obviously to become a denominational church.

The second building, measuring 53 feet by 35, must have been considered rather large by some, as a notation was found to the effect "if Mr. Fairbairn's faith is to be measured by the size of the houses of worship he built at Bodega and Tomales, it is immense."

An examination of the church today reveals that the church bell was made by Rumsey and Company in Seneca Falls, New York. No date is now visible, but if by any chance this be the bell that went through the fire, and has afterwards stood the wear of the coastal climate, it is no wonder. Three sides of the belfry have been boarded up so as to prevent the rain from blowing in.

Recently the bell was pronounced as unsafe by the Marin County Fire Warden of Tomales, and minor repairs had to be made. After being silent for several months it rang again on Easter Sunday, 1949.

The ceiling was lowered 25 inches one time, but the inside measurement is still over 20 feet. The height of the attic at the highest peak is about 10 feet, and the belfry is over 16 feet. Thus from the floor of the church to the top of the belfry on the inside is over 50 feet. The bell has a three-foot wheel and measures 33 inches, inside diameter.

The building has been redecorated a few times and a few changes have been made on the inside, but the building today is about the same as it was in 1868.

In 1868 the deed to the church property was made to the Old School Presbyterian Church and was filed in the County Court House at San Rafael. All  
[Twelve]



titles on the Balsa Rancho filed with the county recorder at San Rafael date back to an Act of Congress of 1868. This act was known as "An Act to Grant the right of Pre-emption to certain Settlers on the Rancho Balsa de Tomales in the State of California."

The deed can be found in Book J of Deeds, page 202, and reads in part as follows: "Commencing at a point ten feet southerly from the southeast corner of the Presbyterian church; thence running northerly along the line of the street two hundred feet; thence westerly at right angles one hundred and twenty-five feet; thence southerly at right angles two hundred feet; thence easterly one hundred and twenty-five feet to point of beginning."

Protestant work in the Tomales coastal area took a setback in 1869, for it was in that year that Mr. Fairbairn left Tomales, Mr. Fraser left Two Rock, and Mr. Oliver Hemstreet left Big Valley Church. All three ministers left church buildings as monuments to their names, but only one still remains, that being Tomales.

Religion suffered a "low ebb" at this time in Tomales. An article in the Petaluma paper under Tomales news stated that a lady protested to the paper that men were spitting tobacco under the church pews, "a filthy habit." Perhaps reference was not to the Presbyterian Church, but in any case tobacco chewing was almost universal in the town and it was indulged in by most men.

## THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VALLEY FORD

Around 1865 the Methodist congregation at Valley Ford, together with the Valley Ford members of the Big Valley Presbyterian Church, agreed to go together and build a "Union Church," since both groups were rather small. The Rev. Oliver Hemstreet was then preaching at Bloomfield and Valley Ford.

The idea appealed to the residents of Valley Ford, as they would then have the church building for the Big Valley Presbyterian Church instead of Bloomfield. It was rumored that Mr. Henry Hall of Bloomfield was about to donate a considerable sum for the purpose of erecting a building in Bloomfield.

The attempt to perpetuate a union in Valley Ford, however, was not a success, and about the same time Mr. Hall donated \$5,000 for the Presbyterian church building to be built in Bloomfield. Thus for a time Presbyterians in Valley Ford hardly knew which way to turn.

"The Pacific," dated December 20, 1866, records: "Each party paid about the same proportion toward it. But, to avoid contention, it was legally deeded to the Methodists, and used by each on alternate Sabbaths. Thus things went on amicably until this fall, when the Methodist Episcopal Conference, without consulting the Presbyterian friends, appointed another minister to occupy the house all the time. The result was intense dissatisfaction, so that much the larger portion of the congregation left and now observed regular worship in a very convenient 'Temperance Hall'."

"Temperance Hall" had been built as a result of the promotional work of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen C. Fowler. They advanced the cause of temperance not only at home but in a much larger sphere. The hall was owned by Mr. Fowler and was given to the church for its use for many years.

The hall was torn down in recent years, as it had been declared unsafe, and some of the lumber was used in the construction of the new home of Mr. and Mrs. Reno Del Curto of Valley Ford, which was, strangely enough, the location of the old Union Church building, according to Mrs. Del Curto.



## TOMALES' SECOND PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER ARRIVES

The Rev. Charles H. Crawford from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was employed as colporteur for the Board of Publication of the Presbyterian Church, and it was while he was thus serving the Board that he happened to come to Tomales in 1870, there to find a fine church building, but no one to preach in it. Mr. Crawford was a pioneer pastor on the Pacific coast, and before he left the Cumberland branch he had served two years as Superintendent of Home Mission Work in the Pacific Synod.

It was also during this year of 1870 that the fusion of the Synod of the Pacific and the Synod of Alta California took place. The Old School and New School churches were reunited and again were known as The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Mr. Crawford was first mentioned in the minutes of Presbytery of May 4, 1870, meeting in Santa Rosa. "Rev. C. H. Crawford presented a letter from the Pacific Presbytery of the Cumberland Church, dismissing him from said Presbytery and recommending him to the Presbytery of Benicia. After the usual examination he was received into our Presbytery and his name ordered to be placed on the roll of Presbytery."

Mr. Crawford is the author of a little book called *Scenes of Earlier Days*, and it is in this book that we find mention made of no Protestant religious services being held when he visited Tomales in 1870. Crawford had found a similar condition existing in Calistoga, so as he says in his book, "I resigned my work as colporteur and resolved to devote all my energies to the two places above named. It was not long until there was a church organized at Calistoga and a subscription started for a church building. After a few months' work there I gave that point up to the brother occupying St. Helena, as Tomales had decided that I must preach there every Sabbath. There was no church organized, neither a Sabbath school, and when the trustees were about to make arrangements for permanent work they told me there was a debt of \$2500 on the building."

If the cost of this building was the reported \$3500 and Mr. Dutton gave \$1,000 toward it as was published in the *Marin Journal*, then no one else had given anything toward this second building at the time of Mr. Crawford's arrival. Later \$1600 was raised at the dedication service, and \$500 was secured from the Board, leaving a total of \$400 to be raised by the trustees.

Mr. Crawford's first move was to get the church debt-free. He got the Trustees to agree to work with him until that debt was paid. (All but the \$500 grant from the Board.)

Mr. Crawford presented the following resolution at a meeting of Presbytery in Bloomfield on Saturday morning, May 6, 1871: "Resolved, that Presbytery hereby authorizes its committee on Church erection to endorse an application, to the Board of Church Erection in New York, from the Tomales Church for the sum of One Thousand Dollars, to aid them in completing their house of worship."

The resolution was approved at that meeting of Presbytery.

The words, "aid them in completing their house of worship," were unfortunate for they give the impression that the church building was not yet completed. This was one of the reasons it was so difficult to check the actual date of the building of the second church. Furthermore, the building must have been totally completed two years before, since there is no mention of finishing it, for instance, on the inside. Then, too, the dedication was held before any of the loan was actually received.

At a meeting in Healdsburg April 26, 1872, the following minutes are recorded: "Report on Church Erection. . . . that applications previously made by the churches

of Bloomfield and Tomales had not been granted." Subsequently, \$500 was received in behalf of Tomales.

This grant mortgage of \$500 has never been cleared, although in 1947 the church treasurer received word that a single payment of \$390.35 would take care of this grant and clear the church title. General Assembly permits discounts to stimulate voluntary repayments, although the text of the mortgage states that it need not be repaid as long as Presbyterian religious services are held in the mortgaged property. It was pointed out that many of the churches are voluntarily repaying their grants in order to make these same funds available to other needy groups. Repayment should be made, if it is ever possible, in order to further the great Christian cause throughout the United States. Meanwhile, the church is asked to send in insurance premiums at stated intervals.

## DEDICATION AND FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF TOMALES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

When Mr. Crawford found out that the Tomales church had never been dedicated, he wrote to the Rev. John Hemphill, pastor of Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, and asked him to come to Tomales and preach the dedicatory sermon. The date was set for Sunday, May 20, 1871.

Mr. Hemphill agreed to that and the services were held as planned. At the conclusion of the service, more than \$1600 was secured by subscriptions and cash.

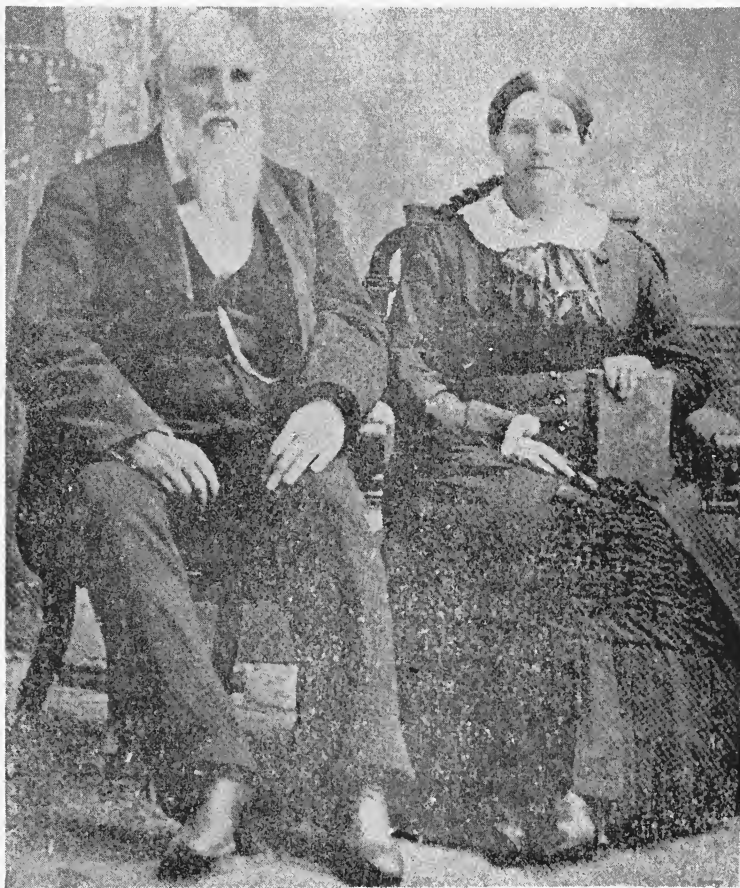
Mr. Crawford then took immediate steps to organize into a Presbyterian church. It is noted that "on July 24, 1871, according to previous notice, certain citizens of Tomales met for the purpose of organizing a Presbyterian church."

The exercises were opened with singing "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord," and with the reading of the 12th chapter of Romans. Prayer was offered by the Rev. R. McCulloch, who was supplying Shiloh and Two Rock.

Thereupon the following paper was presented and read: "We, whose names are hereunto affixed, having strong desires to see the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ prospering amongst us, and believing that the above object can be better accomplished by the organization of a Christian church, do hereby unite in requesting Rev. C. H. Crawford to organize us into a Presbyterian church to be known as the First Presbyterian Church of Tomales, Marin County, California; and to be under the care of Benicia Presbytery and Synod of the Pacific of said Presbyterian church. The following are the names of members joining by letter, viz: John McCausland and Rachel McCausland, his wife; James Kaye, his wife, Elizabeth Kaye; Mrs. Esther Allen, D. Stevenson. Names of those joining by profession of faith: Mrs. Paulina Burbank, John Holland and his wife, Mary Holland; Joseph Irvin and his wife, Anna Irvin; John Buchanan and his wife, Janet Buchanan; John Wilson and his wife, Christina Wilson; I. M. Dutton, wife of Dr. Dutton; James Carson, Thomas Lemon, and Mrs. Mary E. Ables, wife of Thomas Ables.

The members thus received elected John McCausland and James Kaye as ruling elders of said church. On Sabbath, July 16, 1871, John Kaye was ordained, and he and John McCausland were installed ruling elders of said congregation." (From minutes of Presbytery, page 187.)

The Board of Trustees chosen included: Warren Dutton, Thomas McCune, Robert Bailey, George Burbank, and Joseph Irvin. The meeting was then concluded with prayer and the apostolic benediction. The paper was signed by Mr. Crawford and dated July 15, 1871, Tomales.



REV. AND MRS. CHARLES H. CRAWFORD



Steve Freeman in First Auto

## THE BURBANK FAMILY

It is interesting to note that one of the first trustees, Mr. George W. Burbank, was the older brother of Luther Burbank, and as such was responsible for bringing Luther into contact with Tomales. Only a few miles from Tomales, on the present George Burbank farm, is located a field still known as the "potato field," as it was where Luther first experimented with potatoes in California.

The Burbanks are still active in the affairs of the Tomales church, and the son of D. B. Burbank, another brother, is now the chairman of the present Board of Trustees. The Burbanks came from Massachusetts, and as George was one of the older children, activities centered around his fine ranch and beautiful home. Young Luther spent many happy hours walking over the fields and rolling hills studying nature.

The over-all contribution of the Burbanks has been noteworthy. Not only did Luther achieve world-wide recognition and fame, but his older brother, George, was elected one of the supervisors of Marin County, and in 1875 represented his district in the state legislature.

A dramatic scene occurred in 1881, when Mr. Warren Dutton, Tomales' wealthy merchant and banker, gave Luther Burbank an order for 20,000 prune trees. Dutton had suddenly taken an interest in prune growing and wished to commence at once. Dutton had been told by all other nurserymen that it was absolutely impossible to produce trees in eight months, so he turned to Mr. Burbank. At first Luther Burbank was inclined to believe that it was physically impossible, but after he thought about it for a few minutes he began to think it worth trying. Mr. Dutton agreed to finance the project during the summer. The request for the 20,000 trees came in March, 1881. By December 1 Burbank had 19,500 trees ready for planting! Almond seedlings were used for stock, and prune buds were June-budded. The almonds were specially cared for, and toward the last of June and in July and August, a large force of budders was employed in placing the French prune buds on the almond stalks.

## TOMALES MANSE BUILT IN 1872

After the dedication and formal organization of the church in 1871, Mr. Crawford turned his attention to the building of a parsonage. Four lots were secured in another part of town from the church. The exact reason for locating the parsonage away from the church is not known. Perhaps it was because of the cemetery at the church or the necessary water supply. Perhaps it was because of the wind on the hill, or again it may have been because Mr. Dutton was willing for the church to have four lots in this other part of town.

In the spring of 1872 Mr. Crawford made arrangements for the hauling of the lumber. According to his story he "got a good reduction on the price of the lumber."

In the meantime, the ladies of the church, "with their accustomed zeal and toil raised \$1100, the proceeds of fair and festival."

John Wilson was secured as the builder and work began on the parsonage. The comfortable ten-room parsonage was completed during that year, 1872, and Mr. Crawford moved his family in.

In the minutes of Presbytery from a meeting in Oakland on October 4, 1871, we note that a parsonage had been built at Santa Rosa. "This is the first and only one within our bounds." Tomales, then, may have been the second congregation to build a parsonage and this house now holds all records, since it is still in use today by the church.

[Eighteen]

Mr. Crawford served the Tomales church as Stated Supply for three years. In his book he writes, "It was never my privilege to preach to a more whole-souled people than I found at Tomales. They were willing to pay a good salary, and were regular in attendance at church whether they were members or not."

## FIRST MEETING OF PRESBYTERY IN TOMALES CHURCH

The spring meeting of Presbytery was held in the Tomales church, meeting there April 24, 1873, and following days. During that meeting of Presbytery, the members were invited to a dinner at the new parsonage. At the same meeting Mr. Crawford was elected as a commissioner to the General Assembly which met that year in Baltimore. In a few days after the writing of this history, Presbytery will again hold a spring meeting in the Tomales church. It will be the 76th anniversary of the first and only meeting of Presbytery in this church.

The Rev. Charles H. Crawford, having served the Tomales church well, moved on to Bloomfield, where he made permanent work out of what had been only a Sunday afternoon appointment. Mention has already been made of the fact that Mr. Henry Hall had donated \$5,000 toward the Bloomfield building. Yet it had never been completely finished on the inside. Soon after Mr. Crawford began a regular ministry there, this work was completed.

Against the wishes of some of the members of the Big Valley Church, those in that church who lived in and around Bloomfield left the organization known as Big Valley and requested Presbytery to organize them as a separate church. This was done on May 1, 1882.

The remaining members of Big Valley, who for the most part lived in and around Valley Ford, went by the old name until April 19, 1889, when they changed the name to Valley Ford Presbyterian Church. A few years later both the Bloomfield and Valley Ford Presbyterian churches closed their doors and were eventually dropped from the roll of Presbytery.

One of the highlights of the Big Valley church was when the Rev. Lewis Thompson was their pastor about 1870. Mr. Thompson was a noteworthy pioneer pastor in Oregon.

The Sessional records of the Tomales church contain a notation of the church treasurer in the year 1871: "Collected and paid for congregational purposes from April 1, 1871, to April 1, 1872—\$1822.75." The pastor's salary from this was \$697.70. The next year's budget was \$2590.00, of which \$870.00 was to go for the pastor's salary.

The Rev. Henry R. Avery, who had been serving the Shiloh Church and also preaching for the congregation at Valley Ford, decided to go to Tomales after Mr. Crawford left, and he began in May, 1874.

Mr. Avery was the second minister with his family to occupy the new parsonage. Avery also preached at Two Rock. He had the distinction of being Moderator of the Synod of the Pacific, Old School Branch, in 1862.

The statistics for the year that Mr. Avery served the church were: Membership 16, Sunday School 30. The sum of \$870 was raised. Recorded in the sessional records is the fact that on June 7, 1874, "the Rev. H. K. Avery preached for us from I Cor. 2:2, 'For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.'"

On July 19, 1874, the following were listed as trustees: William Rowland, George Bunn, James Carson, Stafford Duncan, and Warren Dutton.

Mr. Avery suffered injuries in a freak railroad accident in April, 1875, when a high wind storm blew a passenger car off the track and down an embankment at the crest of the old grade over Corte Madera hill.

In May, 1875, Mr. Avery left Tomales, and on November 21, 1875, the Rev. Robert Scrimgeour was made Stated Supply, and he promptly moved his family into the parsonage. He also preached at Two Rock. Mr. Scrimgeour was in for hard times and during the church year of 1875-1876 only \$600 was raised. The next year only \$512 was raised. Mr. Scrimgeour added four to the membership during his stay. He left in the spring of 1878.

After Mr. Scrimgeour left the church was vacant until November. Only \$301 was raised that year. This was the lowest figure in the history of the church. Other lows were in 1897 and 1898, when about \$300 was raised in each of those years. Again in 1905 it was reported that only about \$300 was raised.

## RAILROAD COMES TO TOMALES

The big talk of 1875 was the railroad. The route from southern Marin to Tomales was completed in that year. A great celebration took place in one of the new warehouses, and the first freight train ran from this warehouse on December 3, 1875, with a load of three hundred sacks of potatoes shipped by James Fallon. This was the forerunner of many trainloads of produce raised in the vicinity and shipped over this North Pacific Coast Railroad line to Sausalito and thence to San Francisco. Governor Latham was financially interested in this road. The picture of the engine "Tomales" appears in this booklet, and although it never saw service on this particular line, it had been ordered for it and was a typical engine of that day.

In recent years it was said of the original route that it was "a ramshackle narrow gauge affair, built along the lines of least resistance, with lofty disdain of the laws of gravity and a preference for curvature instead of tangents."

The route was discontinued a number of years ago, but for many years it carried Seminary students and professors from San Anselmo to the rural churches along the line, including Tomales.

The Rev. James White came to Tomales in November, 1878, and remained until August of 1879. Meanwhile, Mr. Stafford Duncan had been ordained and installed as an elder on October 1, 1876.

On October 13, 1879, James M. Dinsmore took up the work at Tomales. He added eight to the membership and reported a Sunday School of 38. Congregational receipts for the church year totaled \$700. He soon left, however, and it must have been about this time that the parsonage was rented.

## TOMALES MANSE RENTED

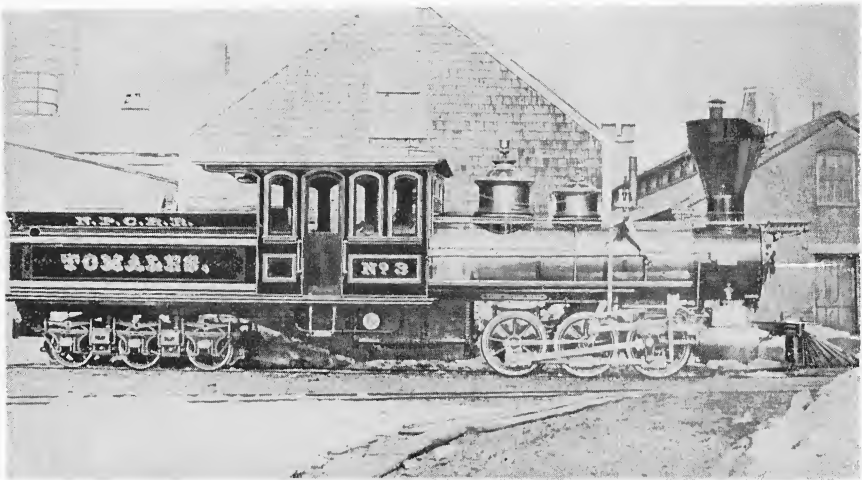
According to the Rev. Elton E. Shell, present occupant of the parsonage, the Dinsmore family must have been about the last minister's family to live in the house until 1923. When Mr. Shell was working on the house in 1946, he discovered that one of the kitchen closets had been lined over and over again with old papers. It turned out that there were several distinct layers, which seemed to tell the story of the different times when families had moved in and begun to keep house.

The papers which constituted the first layer were dated 1877 and 1878 and were for the most part religious, being the Sabbath School Visitor and the Illustrated Christian Weekly. This would seem to indicate that the house was used by the minister and his family who served the church at that time, who were the Dinsmores.

After Mr. Dinsmore left, the Rev. William H. Darden was made Stated Supply. He also served Two Rock and Petaluma. Mr. A. B. Dickinson of Tomales suggests that it was about this time that the parsonage was rented to Mr. Thomas Kidd and



MR. AND MRS. STEPHEN FOWLER



LOCOMOTIVE ORDERED FOR N. P. C. R.

family. Later it was rented to Mr. Dickinson's grandparents, and on July 2, 1886, he says that the Rev. William Darden officiated at the wedding of his mother and father in the parlor of the parsonage.

Mr. Dickinson, having lived in the house for so many years, tells of many interesting things in connection with this home. He speaks of the room above the kitchen, which his grandparents found in an unfinished condition, it having been used as a playroom. They fixed the room up as a comfortable "sitting room" and it was used as such for many years.

There was an old cast iron pump between the pantry door and north window. Outside there were a number of large cypress trees, which made the house "gloomy and cold." "In those days," says Mr. Dickinson, "many families in town owned milk cows. These cows were turned out on the streets and were allowed to roam at will. The cypress trees in front of the parsonage were an especially fine shelter at night. Anyone trying to find his way along without a lantern was apt to stumble over one of these animals and, likely as not, be thrown head over heels as the old cow scrambled to her feet. Some animals had become very cute. They would hook a horn under a latch and work the gate open. Then goodbye to a nice vegetable garden or flower bed. When it was discovered that an animal was in your garden, the marauder would then excitedly stamp about to ruin everything that wasn't eaten."

A small barn was located near the little brook to the rear of the property. One wet winter during the 1880's a heavy rain washed out this brook until it became a gully and the barn nearly fell in. It was then moved forward on solid ground. A high footbridge was built across this gully, near the barn, for the convenience of the railroad men who often rented the houses to the north of the parsonage.

Mr. B. Caligari tells of the time when he and some other town boys used to tease the Chinaman that lived in the little house to the south of the parsonage. When chased they would barricade themselves in the parsonage barn loft by covering the entry with several bales of hay.

The first major repairs to the parsonage were made in 1902 when David Bassett and Peter Caligari put in a new foundation and made a few other repairs. Most of the trees were cut down at this time and the fences were all repaired.

When Mr. Haerle moved his family into the parsonage in 1923 a few more repairs were made, as well as some remodeling. In 1946 extensive repairs were made and the house was again re-decorated.

During the church year of 1882-1882 an enrollment of 100 was reported for the Sunday School. This was the largest that was ever reported in the history of the church, although it nearly reached that figure several times.

The Rev. William H. Darden served the Tomales church as Stated Supply for several years. After leaving Tomales church to the Rev. George W. Hays, he continued to serve in the Presbytery.

## GOING TO PRESBYTERY AT POINT ARENA

It was in 1893 that Mr. Darden had an unusual experience in going to Presbytery which prompted him to write the following account: "Owing to the stormy sea April 5, 1893, and doubt about being able to land at Point Arena's exposed wharf, three of us decided to take the stage from Cazadero on Thursday, hoping to reach our destination on scheduled time. The Fulton Elder, Stated Clerk, and Synodical Missionary left Cazadero at one p. m. with driver Churchman, all inside the two-seated stage. At five o'clock we had our first upset. The wheels on the side occupied by the two preachers, who faced each other, sank deep in the mud, the stage turned over, with the bulky elder on top of the Stated Clerk,

[Twenty-two]



whose arm was bruised. No other damage. For fifty miles the roads were bad. Some places almost impassable. The worst was yet to come. We left the Plantation house after dark. The night was black, with frequent showers to make matters worse. My place from that time on was with Jim Bland, our new and silent careful driver. We had three lamps to lighten us on our way. We had to walk along some extra wretched pieces of road. But with all the care and skill of my right hand man the stage went over at one a. m., again on the preacher's side. Very suddenly he landed on his head, injuring his left ear, marking it for many days, smashing in his hat, to the advantage of a Point Arena merchant.

"The driver landed on his feet and nearly on the top of the missionary, still prone upon the ground; but not for long, for he sprang to the heads of the frightened leaders, held them and watched his demoralized fellow Presbyters, whom he sought to cheer with a familiar recitation, 'Jack and Jill'. In this case the hat crown was broken, 'as Mac fell down and hurt his ear, and Jim came tumbling very near'.

"Nothing was broken. A combined lift righted the stage, and on Friday morning at seven, cold but still courageous, we reached Point Arena. The Lakeport minister and elder arrived an hour later, having spent a doleful night in the Coast Range, caught in the dense darkness, without lantern and no friendly door open to welcome them. The thoroughly soaked Healdsburg minister and elder managed to get through on time; but the Bishop of Vallejo, who had ventured to embark on the boisterous Pacific, was fortunate enough to make a landing in time for the opening of Presbytery Thursday night. All this was followed by a delightful meeting, with abounding hospitality bestowed upon us by kind friends, who for the first time had entertained the members of Presbytery."

The Rev. George W. Hays, who followed Mr. Darden at Tomales, also preached at Two Rock, Valley Ford, and Bodega. He soon decided to give full time to Two Rock church and left Tomales. Mr. Hays served the Two Rock church for ten years. At the close of his ministry the original Two Rock building burned to the ground. However, it was not long before a new building, the present one, was built and it was dedicated on March 29, 1896. The ladies of the Tomales church made a generous gift toward the erection of this new building.

In 1880 a list of weak churches was compiled by Presbytery. It is interesting to note that the Tomales church does not appear in the list. From minutes of Presbytery, 1880: "The order of the day, 'weak churches,' was taken up and considered until the hour of recess. After recess the Presbytery resumed the consideration of the subject of 'weak churches,' and the proper method of grouping them, which resulted in the adoption of the following resolution; viz: That the Presbytery in its supervision of the work of Home Missions within its bounds, and in providing for the supply of our feeble churches, recommends the following plan of grouping them: (1) That Bolinas and Saucelito constitute one field. (2) That Two Rocks, Bloomfield and Stony Point constitute one field. (3) That Valley Ford, Bodega, and Duncan Mills constitute one field. (4) That Healdsburg, Fulton, and Windsor constitute one field. (5) That Dixon and Westminster constitute one field. (6) That Vacaville and Elmira constitute one field. (7) That Vallejo and Benicia constitute one field."

## NEW OFFICERS IN THE CHURCH

Arthur Patterson, already ordained, was installed as an elder on December 3, 1880. Josias Rock was also ordained and installed on that date. James Patterson Rhoades was ordained and installed March 4, 1883. In 1887, on August 5, the following were listed as trustees: John Alexander, John McDonald, and Joseph Scott.

## ALEXANDER FAIRBAIRN RETURNS TO TOMALES CHURCH

About 30 years after he had first appeared in the town of Tomales, the Rev. Alexander Fairbairn returned to be made Stated Supply. It must have been a great joy for him to preach in the church once again. Mr. Fairbairn is the only minister that ever returned to Tomales to take up the work of the church which had been left at a previous date.

Mr. Fairbairn is still remembered in the community. Dr. Thomas Fraser, upon learning the death of Mr. Fairbairn, wrote to the **Occident**, and the following appears in the March 10, 1898, issue: "Rev. Alexander Fairbairn died at Williams, Colusa County, California, on the 24th inst. The telegram announcing his death gives no particulars. This is written to express sympathy with his bereaved family, my own sense of bereavement and heartfelt sorrow for the loss of a brother dearly beloved. His honest sincerity and whole-heartedness made him a true friend. . . . In his prime he commanded the respect of all who knew him. As a preacher of the Word and a Christian brother, few men on this coast were more honored and loved. . . . In the early days he supplied many new fields on small support but never complained, never failed to do his duty."

The Seminary, now located in San Anselmo, supplied the church with students from time to time, following Mr. Fairbairn, until the time when Thomas M. Boyd, the resident pastor of the Bloomfield church, was made Stated Supply of the Tomales church in 1896. It was also in 1896 that Mr. Joseph Scott was ordained and installed as an elder.

Matthew T. A. White took over the work at Tomales in 1899. He devoted one-half of his time to Two Rock. It was during his ministry that a "revival" meeting was held in the Tomales church. The Rev. G. H. Madill assisted Mr. White during this series of meetings. Large congregations were present, even when the winter storms of 1899 were so severe.

According to one report, "these meetings proved to be a season of refreshing from on high. Almost every family in the valley for miles around was visited and worship held with those who could be gathered in. Here indeed the work was arduous." Thirteen united with the church, 12 coming on profession of faith. A Sunday School was organized at Marshall. During the ministry of Mr. White, the membership reached a new high of 41.

An interesting meeting of the Session was held on October 13, 1901, when the following minutes were recorded: "Resolved, that as a Session, we in the future be more particular concerning those who are admitted as members of this church." Two new elders had been added to the Session on June 10, 1900, they being first ordained. These were David Bassett and James Farley.

After M. T. A. White, W. E. Marshall supplied the pulpit from 1902-1903. Following Marshall, Andrew G. Whitley, a seminary student, was in charge.

In 1902, at a meeting of the Session on March 29, it was "Resolved, that in the future the trustees will attend to all the money matters of the church . . . that the Psalms be used for singing both in Sabbath School and church singing . . . that the members of the church be urged to teach their children the shorter catechism . . . that the 'Westminster' helps be used in the Sabbath School in the future."

The Rev. George Fisher accepted the pastorate in 1905. He also served Bodega. The Fishers have kept in touch with Tomales through the years and return for a visit now and then. Mr. Fisher retired in 1909.

From the minutes of Session, September 12, 1909, we find that it "was agreed that in the future a collection be taken up every Sabbath."

In March, 1910, the rotary system of term service was adopted for elders.

[Twenty-four]



LADIES' AID



SUNDAY SCHOOL

## TOMALES CHURCH BECOMES SELF-SUPPORTING

It was during the ministry of the Rev. William Kapteyn that the Tomales church ceased to receive aid from the Mission Board. Mr. Kapteyn, who came in September of 1909, insisted that the church be self-supporting. The following is recorded from a congregational meeting of March, 1910: "The minister asked and received permission to appoint some ladies as cooperators in the work of the church. Accordingly he named three lady deputees to look after the regular collections and the collections for the Church Boards; then to work for a self-supporting church; then to supervise order and cleanliness in the church building."

In a session meeting held on June 12, 1910, "Mr. Farley stated that Mrs. Burns, in name of the lady deputees, had spoken to him about the church collections and the self-supporting church, and he as an elder of the church earnestly desired that the Session would accept and confirm the work of the sister to that end. It was then agreed to make the church self-supporting as soon as possible and to take yearly collections for all the Church Boards in accordance with the wishes of the sisters."

Mr. Kapteyn remained in Tomales until 1912. He had a son who attended the Seminary and who served the church at Novato.

In 1912, on September 29, Daniel Sherod Davis began his ministry at Tomales. He was in his senior year at the Seminary at the time. He served the church for five years, leaving on March 1, 1917.

Another man had been elected to the Session in 1912, and it was on June 2 that William Bassett was ordained and installed. At the same date the following were the trustees: David Bassett, William Mitchell, James Armstrong, Joseph Marshall, and James Burns.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Davis had been a Sunday School missionary in the state of Utah, but had decided to attend seminary and become a regular ordained minister. He left Tomales for Pilot Rock, Oregon.

Among other things that he had worked out at Tomales was the Cemetery Memorial Service. This service was held regularly for a few years but it was eventually discontinued.

The Rev. J. Chester White followed Mr. Davis, arriving in 1917 and staying until he resigned on May 5, 1918. He was very well liked by some of the young people especially, as he was a young man and full of enthusiasm. He was noted for his piano playing and was somewhat of an exhibitionist at the keyboard. He had played for dances at one time. White was a student at the Seminary when he first went to Tomales. He tried out "Billy Sunday tactics" in the Tomales pulpit, jumping around and waving his arms wildly in the air as he preached.

Mr. White began holding prayer meetings in the local homes and school houses. He was "out to convert the community."

The Rev. J. Chester White is now listed under Santa Barbara Presbytery as serving the Presbyterian Church of Arroyo Grande.

On June 17, 1917, Jacob Gerritsen was ordained and installed as an elder. He has served the church for over 30 years in this capacity. Recognition was recently made of his long service to the church, and although the church session was under the term service plan, Mr. Gerritsen was honored by being elected as a "lifetime" member of the Session. At a meeting of the Session on May 5, 1918, he was elected Session Clerk, and he has continued to act as such down through the years.

Other officers elected at about this time were: William J. Farley and Jacob Gerritsen to the trustees in 1917. George Burbank in 1918, and James Marshall in 1920. Harry Lundy was also elected to the trustees in 1922.

The Rev. Fred S. Shimian was called after Mr. White. He served from August, 1918, to December 1, 1919, when he left to go to the Petaluma church. Later he was employed in the Tomales bank as a clerk.

From the minutes of the congregational meeting held on March 9, 1919, "Rev. Shimian gave a lengthy address on the New Era Movement. . . . Mrs. David Bassett reported for the Ladies' Aid Society. . . . The ladies had bought a liberty bond of \$100 and had done much war work during the year."

Mr. Shimian is now in Coos Bay, Oregon, where he expects to live in retirement.

The Seminary again supplied the pulpit for several years, when finally John R. Stevenson was called to become Stated Supply in 1922. Mr. Stevenson remained only for a short time, resigning on March 18, 1923, partially because of a sermon he had preached on "evolution." According to Mr. Shimian, John Stevenson said as he left, "Even in pain there is pleasure!" Minutes of General Assembly, 1948, list John R. Stevenson as being the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Burns, Wyoming.

On April 29, 1920, we find the following record: "An adjourned meeting of the session and trustees was held this day to consider what was best to do with the parsonage. Whether to sell it or have the tenant vacate and fix it up for the minister. After some discussion it was decided to have the tenant vacate and fix the parsonage and let it remain for the minister at all times. It was decided to notify the tenant by letter to vacate July first."

On August 18, 1920, the "Session, Trustees and Ladies' Aid met at two o'clock at the church to discuss what was to be done with the parsonage. It was decided after considerable discussion that modern plumbing be installed and other changes made."

These changes were made, but the house was again rented before Tomales secured a resident ministr.

### THE REV. GEORGE F. HAERLE

The church was vacant for a time following Mr. Stevenson's resignation, but in the spring of 1923 the Rev. George Fred Haerle of Lake County was made Stated Supply and served the church faithfully until 1942.

The rented parsonage again caused a little difficulty, as Mr. Haerle desired to move his family from Lake County at once. It was necessary for him to move them into a cottage at Dillon Beach for a few months before the parsonage was vacated.

While living at the Beach, Mr. Haerle came into contact with many of the families there, and for a time he held evening services in the Dillon Beach hall, averaging over 100 in attendance.

Tomales services at that time were also well attended, especially the musical programs put on for the entire community, which helped to develop a remarkable community spirit.

Although the need for a social hall or annex at the church came up from time to time, being discussed fully at the March 18, 1923, congregational meeting, the lack of one did not stop Mr. Haerle. He had a partition removed at the parsonage, which enabled him to hold large socials there. Youngsters, and oldsters as well, enjoyed many socials held by Mr. and Mrs. Haerle in the parsonage.

When Mr. Haerle began preaching at Tomales, the church was suffering from the effects of many short pastorates, student pastors, and irregular services. He determined to make the church come to life, and the remarkable development which occurred was surprising, since he continued to teach in the Lake County schools during the week.

Mr. Haerle was born and reared in Germany, but received his theological

training at the German Wallace College and Nast Theological Seminary in Berea, Ohio. His first charge was the German Methodist Church in San Jose, where he remained for four years, also teaching music and English. He had also conducted religious services in some of the German-Russian lumber camps of Wisconsin.

His first sermon in the English language was preached in a little Presbyterian chapel at Lakeside, above Los Gatos. It was about this time that he became acquainted with the Rev. Charles R. Brown, who interested him in home mission work. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Haerle took up Congregational missionary work in Humboldt County, with three preaching points: Loleta, Fields Landing, and Falk. It was in the Loleta church that he was ordained to the Gospel ministry. For about three years he held three church services, conducted three Sunday Schools, and traveled as much as 60 miles every Sunday by horse and buggy.

Mr. Haerle then returned to Germany for a visit. His father was the pastor of a Methodist church in Germany. It was while in Germany that Mr. Haerle received a call to the First Congregational Church of Santa Rosa. He accepted the call and served the church for about two years, only to find his health failing.

After regaining his strength while living on a mountain ranch, Mr. Haerle visited some friends in Lakeport. It was during this visit that his friends there asked him to preach in the Methodist church, and to conduct their Christmas music. Presbyterians who happened to hear him invited him to preach in the Presbyterian church, as it was vacant at the time. It was here that Mr. Haerle remained, eventually joining Redwoods Presbytery and later becoming the installed pastor of the Lakeport Presbyterian Church. During his stay in Lakeport he introduced music into the public school system and inaugurated a very successful Sunday evening community program.

Thus you can see that when Mr. Haerle took up the Tomales pastorate he was interested in making a few changes. He describes the Tomales church music at that time as being abominable. "The wheezy old organ even had a mouse's nest in it."

During his ministry in Tomales he promoted a united church service, held once a month in the nearby churches, in which Bloomfield, Two Rock, Occidental, Freestone, and Tomales joined together. A fine united choir was a feature of every service. This arrangement was carried on for about two years.

The church was re-decorated when a gift of over \$1,000 from the Scott estate was made available by Mr. LeBaron and Mr. Mitchell. About the same time the Scott ranch was deeded to the church, and Mr. Haerle moved his family out on the ranch near Dillon Beach.

During Mr. Haerle's time the following were elected to the Session: Alexander Mitchell, William Reasoner, Thomas Wilson, and Eugene Brown. Mr. Wilson, however, did not choose to serve. New trustees elected during that time were Walter Lawson, Alex Mitchell, and Eugene Brown.

Mr. Haerle gave the best years of his life to Tomales and it is impossible to give an adequate summary of his contributions. Illness forced him to give up the church in 1942, after serving for about 20 years, the longest pastorate the church has ever had.

The Rev. George F. Haerle and his wife live on the Scott ranch near Dillon Beach, on which they have made the old Scott home into a very comfortable dwelling.

## RECENT PASTORS AND CHURCH EVENTS

The Rev. N. E. Gibbs, Methodist pastor, and father of Mrs. Howard Lawson, Dillon Beach, was made Stated Supply of the church following Mr. Haerle. Mr. Gibbs, an older man, gave the church a very fine ministry from March, 1942, until [Twenty-eight]



THE MANSE



REV. ELTON E. SHELL



MEMORIAL DAY IN CEMETERY

Mr. Laing Sibbet, student pastor of Two Rock Church, became its regular pastor and began to serve Tomales as well in November, 1944.

During all this time there was considerable talk about a proposed social hall or annex, which church records show was seriously proposed as early as 1923. At the annual congregational meeting of 1940 it was voted to set aside a fund as a building fund under the control of the church treasurer.

In January, 1945, Mr. Sibbet reported to the Session that he had found a Seminary student in his middler year who would be interested in becoming student supply. The student, Mr. Elton E. Shell, assistant pastor of First United Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, was invited to Tomales to preach to the congregation on Sunday evening, February 18, 1945. The congregation extended to him a call to become student supply for one year. Mr. Shell was born in Woodland, California, in 1921, was graduated from Esparto Union High School, 1938; A. B. degree from University of Redlands, 1943, and B. D. degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary in 1946.

In the spring of 1946 the church extended a call to him to become the regular pastor. He accepted the call, but as he was still under the care of Riverside Presbytery, arrangements for his installation at Tomales were postponed until such time as he would be ordained and transferred to Redwoods Presbytery. He was ordained on June 23, 1946, in the First Presbyterian Church of Redlands, and dismissed to Redwoods Presbytery June 25, being received by that body at a meeting of Presbytery in the Corte Madera-Larkspur church July 1, 1946. Arrangements were made for the installation service to be held in the Tomales church October 27, 1946. This service of installation was the first of its kind in the church, and Mr. Shell has the distinction of being its first installed pastor. The other ordained ministers were all Stated Supplies.

During Mr. Shell's ministry, Mrs. Walter Lawson and Mr. Roy Parks were added to the Session. D. B. Burbank, Harold Johnstone, Harold Rowan, Joseph McCammon, Ralph Bassett, and Merle Lawson were added to the Trustees. Mrs. Alec Mitchell, Mrs. Harold Rowan, Mrs. Philip Justis, and Mrs. George Haerle were elected Deaconesses.

World War II days were busy ones for those who remained at home, and many of the men were enlisted in the armed services. Church ladies joined other women in Red Cross work and "airplane watches." They shared in an effort to make the service men feel at home whenever they were in the area. Ranchers worked long hours in intensified agriculture. The saddest news of the war came when the report reached Tomales in July, 1945, that Sergeant John Haerle had been killed in Belgium. John, son of the Rev. Mr. Haerle, was a member of the church and had been an outstanding boy in the community.

In 1945 a building committee was appointed, with D. B. Burbank as chairman. This committee did a tremendous piece of work for the church, in preparation for an annex, which is not yet built. First of all, the Clark School was purchased and torn down in order that lumber might be had. Interestingly enough, this school, located near Tomales, was in possession of one of the old bells of the San Rafael Mission. The bell, however, had been removed before the church purchased it.

Secondly, an adequate water supply was made available for the church and cemetery. Then, trees which had been mutilated years before, causing cold drafts through the cemetery, were removed. Meanwhile, two Sunday School rooms were erected to meet an emergency situation.

Early in 1946 the trustees authorized the pastor to make arrangements to get the church incorporated according to the laws of the state. This was done and the church became an incorporated body on February 11.

Another large project for the church was the reconditioning of the manse.



It had been rented since Mr. Haerle moved out, and although it was to be made available in June, 1945, it was not until August, 1946, that the occupants were able to get housing elsewhere. Thus the trustees were delayed over a year in this project and at one time gave up the thought of putting it in shape and listed it with a Petaluma real estate firm. At this time they planned to build a small house on the church property. The parsonage did not sell, however, and on Thanksgiving Day, 1946, after working with others for many days on the house, Mr. Shell moved his last household goods and family from San Anselmo to Tomales.

Due to the unfinished condition of the house, it was necessary to cook meals on hotplates in one of the upstairs bedrooms, which also served as a living room. One by one the various rooms were completed, and by December, 1947, most of the rooms were in order. Residents of the coastal communities gathered at the manse on December 23, 1947, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the manse and to participate in the "open house" sponsored by the Rev. and Mrs. Elton Shell. Many of the church members and friends had spent a good deal of time making the house over, and it was with a great deal of interest that people gathered together to enjoy the results.

Mr. Shell has said many times that he should write a book on this manse project. There were many hilarious scenes and even dramatic episodes. One day a Marin County building inspector stormed into the house, shocking the young minister with foul language, and demanding a permit for the work in progress. Because no one person was in charge of the job, no one had ever bothered to look into the matter of a permit; therefore none was to be had. The inspector promptly ordered everyone to go home and not to drive another nail until the permit was taken care of.

Volunteer work at night was trying. Poor light and tired people made it necessary to do some jobs over again. Paint administered to a wall at night looked altogether different the next day. The septic tank was delivered at the church instead of the manse. The hole for it was dug too small and had to be enlarged. Two men arrived with a pressure pump, not knowing who had ordered it or whether it was for the cemetery or manse. Church parishioners were called in and, after a consultation, it was decided because of its small size it must be for the manse. The question of where to put it was decided when the men left it in the front hall. Later it was moved into the dining room, then to the back bedroom, and finally to a clothes closet, before it was installed outside. Bathroom fixtures ordered for downstairs were not picked up in time, so they were sold to someone else.

Wallboard suddenly became impossible to get. A search was made from Napa to Dixon, which resulted in a few pieces. Doors were hung backwards by sleepy men who should have been in bed instead of trying to do finished carpenter work. The basement pit for the furnace leaked water when the first rains came, so that it was necessary to bail it out every few hours. A drain finally had to be put in. The kitchen floor had settled so that an inch board had to be put under one side of the stove to level it. The kitchen sink had to be installed twice. One electrician had to be followed all over the house, as he couldn't seem to figure out how to go about things. A hole had to be cut in the kitchen floor to get the suction pipe out of the well for repairs. The upstairs toilet began to leak every time it was flushed, so that one had to push a bucket to the side of it.

One of the hired electricians, a union man, hooked up the wiring so that when one tried to turn the front hall light on from the upstairs control, the dining room lights went on very brightly and the hall light went very dim. In addition, two closet lights that had been installed would not work. The halls still echo with the moaning of this electrician, who kept saying, "My feet are cold—what a place!—what a job!"

**Pacific Parish News**, a church newspaper, was mimeographed for the first time in April, 1947. This paper is still put out by Mr. Shell at intervals. Vacation Bible Schools have been held during the summers. A memorial day service was held in the cemetery in 1947 when the newly installed water system was dedicated, with Mr. Shell and Mr. D. B. Burbank ceremoniously drawing water from a faucet near the grave of the donor of the water, Mrs. J. J. Buchanan, and watering the flowers beside her grave.

The first Sunday in October, 1948, a unified service was begun in the church, which has been continued. Worship begins every Sunday morning at 10:45, as well as two Sunday School classes. One class meets during the sermon, and the other classes meet after the worship service. All go home together at 12:05.

Tomales Presbyterian Church is observing its 84th anniversary year of a continuous ministry, during the second State Centennial Year. Special services were held during the meeting of Redwoods Presbytery at the Tomales church, which marked the 76th anniversary of a Presbytery meeting in Tomales.

It is worthy of note that the church has been a perpetual lighthouse on the Pacific Coast from the Bolinas parish to Bodega through these many years. One by one the pioneers have passed on. On October 8, 1945, the Rev. Elton E. Shell officiated at the funeral of John Warren Dutton, which was held in the church that his father had helped establish in 1865. Mr. Dutton was born in Tomales in 1863, and after his father had passed away he continued to carry on some of the activities of his father, supervising the Protestant Cemetery until he deeded it to the church in recent years. Thus Mr. Dutton was laid to rest along with the other members of the Dutton family who had gone on before. Five of the six bearers at the service were men with the Dutton name.

There are a number of the descendants of pioneers listed as communicant members of the church. The third and fourth generations are rapidly constituting the membership and the third generation have already assumed many responsibilities. The present roll of members reveals that three have been on the roll for over 50 years. Mrs. Elizabeth Steele, who joined by letter in December, 1890; Mrs. Margaret McClure, who joined by letter in October, 1896, and Mrs. Sarah Parks, who joined by Confession of Faith in December, 1899.

The Ladies' Aid Society, organized during the ministry of the Rev. William Kapteyn, has proved to be one of the finest things for the church. This faithful group of women has carried on many worth while activities, and the excellent condition of the church building today, after 81 years of use, bears testimony to the fact that they have seen to it that it is always in a good state of repair and cleanliness.

Mrs. Arnold Gerritsen was president of this organization for 12 years before she passed away. Mrs. Sarah Parks has served as secretary for about 25 years, 21 of which have been continuous since 1928.

Thus the church and her various organizations continue to serve the community of Tomales and surrounding area.

Let us close this history with the words of an unknown author, who in reference to this church said: "It is the only Protestant church in the vicinity, and many lives have been cheered and blessed by its ministrations. Not a few of them have found their burial place in the cemetery adjoining the House of God, where they worshiped and sought the preparation all need for the worship of the Heavenly Sanctuary."

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